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House of Representatives

The House met at 12:30 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. LARSEN of Washington).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
January 26, 2010.

I hereby appoint the Honorable RICK LARSEN to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 6, 2009, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 30 minutes and each Member, other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip, limited to 5 minutes.

U.S. AND WORLD RESPONDS TO HAITI'S EARTHQUAKE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, it has now been 2 weeks since a 7.0 earthquake struck Haiti on the afternoon of January 12. Over these past 14 days, we have seen pictures of the devastation of Port-au-Prince and the surrounding communities. Estimates of the number of dead continue to rise. And the injured in the capital alone is already in the tens of thousands, many needing sophisticated medical care. People live

in the streets and open spaces, fearful of the daily aftershocks. The very basics of life, water, food, and shelter are absent or in short supply.

We watch in anguish as we learn about the potential number of newly orphaned children in a country that already had around 400,000 orphans. The Washington Post ran a story on Saturday about how 75 percent of the schools have been destroyed and the deaths of so many teachers and students. Nearly every Haitian family in the affected areas suffered the loss of at least one loved one, and nearly every UN, international agency, and NGO operating in the area suffered devastating losses among their Haitian and international staff.

And while our own U.S. Embassy staff and aid agencies worked around the clock to respond to the crisis, each and every one of them are also dealing with their own shock and grief over lost family members and Haitian and U.S. colleagues.

In my congressional district, Mr. Speaker, Britney Gengel, the daughter of Len and Cherylann Gengel from Rutland, Massachusetts, remains missing. She is among the approximately 200 Haitian and foreign nationals who were in the Hotel Montana when the earthquake struck. She was part of a student team from Florida's Lynn University in Haiti working with Food for the Poor. In the few days that she was in Haiti, she had already emailed her parents to tell them that she felt that she had found her life's calling.

Hundreds of search and rescue workers have been active day and night at the Hotel Montana, including U.S. teams from Fairfax, Virginia; Miami-Dade; and Los Angeles counties. One rescue worker, talking with Britney's father, spoke movingly about how this was one of the worst sites he had ever worked on, and if his daughter were trapped here, he wouldn't give up on finding her either. The compassion and

empathy of the rescue workers and every member of our U.S. Embassy team are palpable, and their commitment to all victims' families is total.

We see on our television and read in the papers and online of the generosity and resilience of the human spirit: people helping people, comforting one another, sacrificing for the well-being of one another. We often forget how much the Haitian people are helping one another as we struggle to provide and get aid to them.

Governments, international agencies, NGOs, corporations, and individuals have responded and mobilized as never before. On Friday evening, I was in my hometown of Worcester, Massachusetts, at an event entitled Worcester Cares for Haiti, to mobilize donations from our local community. And I am sure that many Members of this House have been at similar events in their own districts.

Aid is pouring into Haiti to reach the more than 3 million people directly affected by the earthquake. It is flying in to Santo Domingo and Barahona airports in the Dominican Republic and being trucked overland in vast convoys. It is landing at the Port-au-Prince airport, which now receives over 100 flights day and night. And thanks to our Navy and Coast Guard, the destroyed Port-au-Prince docks are now 30 percent operational.

I want to thank all the nations of the world that have responded so generously. I especially want to thank our hemispheric neighbors, many of whom annually suffer from natural disasters and still struggle to overcome centuries of poverty. They have been particularly generous, from Argentina, Brazil, and Chile to Colombia, Cuba, Mexico, and so many others. And a very special thank you to the Government and people of the Dominican Republic.

To my own government, Secretary Clinton, Secretary Gates, Administrator Raj Shah, Secretary Napolitano,

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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